

[English]

Kashmir Issue

6189. KUNWAR SARVARAJ SINGH :

SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the newitem under captioned "Kashmir Muddei Per Bharat-Pak Mein, Yuddh Sambhav-Cheen" published in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated April 3, 1997; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and the decision proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report has no basis in fact.

Threat To Jantar Mantar

6190. LT. GENERAL (RETD.) PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether construction of highrise buildings near Jantar Mantar in New Delhi will pose a grave threat to it;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any decision not to approve plans of high rise buildings near Jantar Mantar;

(c) the number of plans received by the Government in respect of construction of high-rise buildings near Jantar Mantar having proposed height of above 50 feet and the action taken by the Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) The plans for high-rise buildings around Jantar Mantar are sanctioned as per the provisions of the Master Plan for Delhi, Building Bye-laws and guidelines of the Archeological Survey of India on the subject.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) NDMC has reported that presently no such plans are pending with them.

Indo Pak Trade Relation

6191. SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken initiative to

enter into a dialogue with the new Government of Pakistan to explore the potential for trade between the two countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) and (b) Government has consistently expressed its interest to expand commercial and economic relations with Pakistan for mutual benefit. Government has extended Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan. Our views regarding the importance of expanding trade ties have been conveyed on many occasions to Pakistan. Government hopes that Pakistan will respond positively to our endeavours to expand commercial and economic relations.

Passport Applications

6192. SHRI CHHATAR SINGH DARBAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the passport office-wise number of applications received during 1995 and 1996 for seeking passports;

(b) the number of applications out of them which have been disposed of;

(c) the number of applications out of them which have been rejected for various reasons; and

(d) the total number of passports issued and the time by which the remaining passports are likely to be issued ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a), (b) and (d) A statement showing the number of applications received by various Passport Offices during 1995 and 1996, and the number of passports issued during these years, Passport Office-wise, is attached.

The applications pending at the end of 1995 continued to be disposed off in 1996. Similarly, those pending at the end of 1996 were disposed off during 1997. It is not possible to determine the exact date when each one of those applications was disposed off as disposal is an on-going exercise.

(c) Applications once received by the Passport Office are not rejected. In case the applications are complete in all respects and the Police clearance report is received, passports are granted. Some applications continue to pend because of either incomplete columns in the passport application form, deficiencies in supporting documents or receipt of incomplete police report or delay in the receipt of replies to references made to other passport issuing authorities. Therefore, the pending cases continue to be granted as and when the deficiencies are fulfilled. In case the applicant does not respond despite repeated reminders, the application is closed.